

# ROUTE DESCRIPTION - RM 160 to 78

NOTE: (R) and (L) represent right and left banks of the river when facing downstream.

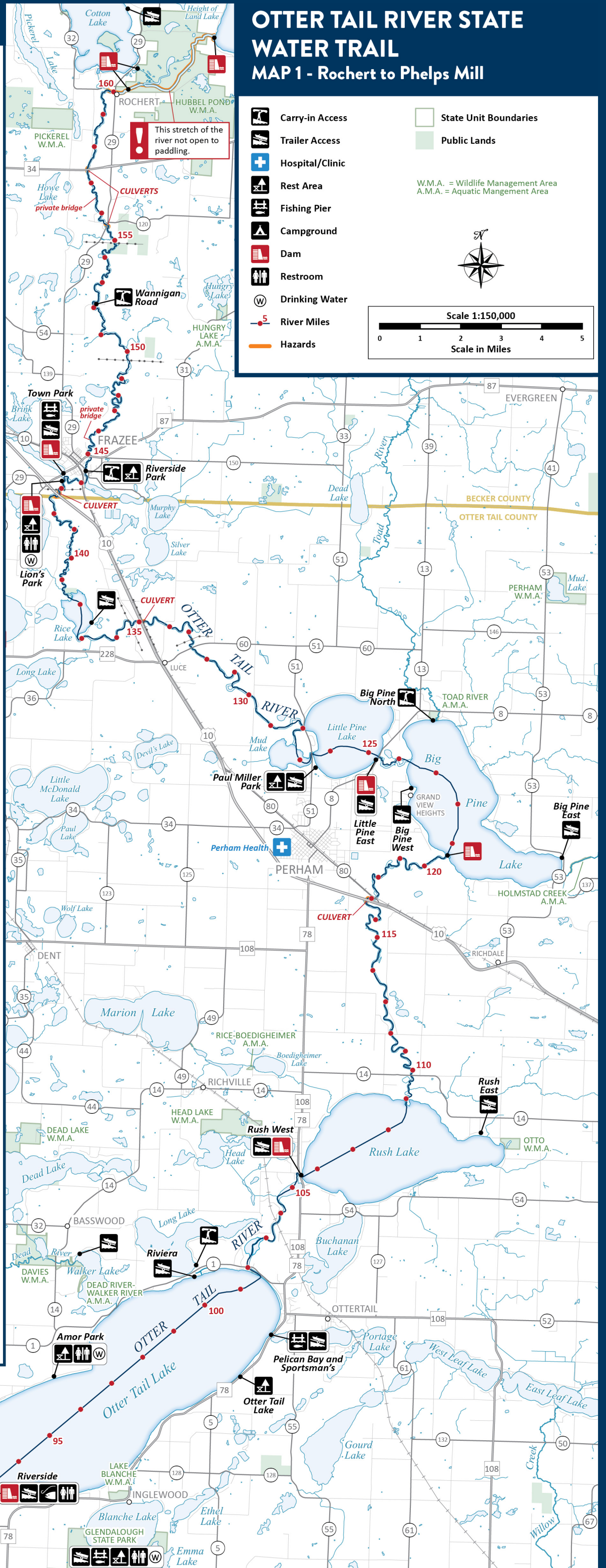
## RIVER MILE

- 160.0** Beginning of State Water Trail/Highway 29 bridge and culvert. Depending upon flow conditions, experienced paddlers can make it through. Others should start downstream of the culvert. From this point to Highway 34, there are several commercial tubing vendors using the river. City of Rochert.
- 158.4** **157.7** Flow increases through former bridge/rock dam location. **335th Avenue bridge.** Possible one foot drop on downstream side. During low flow, passage is difficult.
- 157.4** **State Highway 34 bridge.** Can be paddled during most flow conditions. No parking on highway right of way is strictly enforced. Congested area during tubing season.
- 156.6** **Small private bridge.** Portage on private property is necessary (either side).
- 155.5** **Highway 29 bridge and culvert.** Depending upon flow conditions, experienced paddlers can make it through. Others should portage on either side. Watch for steep banks and traffic when portaging.
- 154.9** **Powerline crossing.**
- 152.1 (L)** **Wannigan Road carry-in access and bridge.** Usually passable. Limited parking at access.
- 149.8** **Powerline crossing.**
- 145.5** **Private, covered bridge.**
- 145.4** **Old bridge remnants.** Watch for concrete and rebar.
- 144.9** **Highway 87 bridge/North Lake Street.** City of Frazee.
- 144.5** **Five man-made rock weirs.** These speed up flow.
- 144.5 (L)** **Riverside Park.** Carry-in access and rest area. A series of small, rock weirs for the next 1/2 mile.
- 144.5** **East Main Avenue bridge.** Depending upon flow conditions, experienced paddlers can make it through. Others should portage on either side.
- 144.3 (L)** **Utility pipe crosses the river.** If river is low, possible to pass under by ducking. Otherwise, 30 yd. portage.
- 144.1 (R)** **Three bridge crossings.** No passage underneath first bridge. Portage right along the road. Watch for traffic!
- 143.3 (R)** **Dam/Lion's Park.** Portage right 100 yds under a wooden stairway. Fifteen foot drop with four rows of boulders. Toilets, picnic shelter, playground, statue of a turkey.
- 143.0, 134.0, and 116.0,** the river passes through culverts under Highway 10. Paddling through these culverts is not recommended, except by experienced paddlers. Be sure to scout them first for hazards such as high and/or fast water, drop offs, floating bogs, and other obstructions. **DO NOT** portage over Highway 10.
- 143.0** **Highway 10 bridge and culvert.** See warning above. Powerline crossing.
- 137.4 (L)** **Rice Lake trailer access.**
- 135.4** **Powerline crossing.**
- 135.1** **Black Diamond Road culverts.** Often blocked by bogs.
- 134.9** **Highway 10 bridge and culverts.** See warning above.
- 134.2** **403rd Avenue bridge.**
- 132.8** **Powerline crossing.**
- 132.5** **Highway 60 bridge.**
- 129.7** **425th Avenue bridge.**
- 126.6** **Highway 51 bridge.**
- 126.5 (R)** **Paul Miller Park.** Trailer access and rest area.
- 124.7 (R)** **Dam.** Portage 50 yds. Highway 8/455th Avenue bridge. Trailer access and toilet.
- 123.5 (L)** **Big Pine Lake carry-in access.**
- 123.5 (R)** **Big Pine West trailer access.**
- 120.9 (L)** **Big Pine East trailer access.**
- 120.7** **Dam.** Portage right 50 yds. Access is by permission and payment of fee at Big Pine Lodge.
- 117.1** **Highway 80 and railroad bridges.**
- 116.9** **Highway 10 bridge and culvert.** See note above.
- 112.0** **390th Street/River Road culverts.**
- 109.9** **County Road 14/St. Lawrence Road culvert.**
- 108.0 (L)** **Rush Lake East trailer access.**
- 105.6** **Dam upstream of Highway 78.** Portage right 50 yds. Rush Lake West trailer access with parking and toilet. Railroad bridge.
- 103.7** **County Road 1 bridge.**
- 100.2 (R)** **Riviera trailer access.**
- 100.1 (L)** **Pelican Bay/Sportsman's trailer accesses.** Fishing pier.
- 98.8 (L)** **Otter Tail Lake rest area.**
- 95.9 (R)** **Amor Park.** Rest area, toilet and drinking water.
- 92.8 (R)** **Otter Tail Lake West carry-in access.**
- 92.0** **County Road 72 and dam.** Portage left 75 yds. Riverside trailer access with parking, shorefishing and toilet. NOTE: Heavy tubing use on warm days. Highway 83 bridge.
- 91.8** **Highway 83 bridge.**
- 91.7 (L)** **Deer Lake trailer access.**
- 88.4** **County Road 1 bridge.**
- 86.4** **County Road 45 bridge.**
- 85.0 (R)** **Phelps Mill County Park and Dam.** Portage 285 yd. Carry-in access, toilet and rest area.
- 81.5** **County Road 35 bridge.** West Lost Lake trailer access (L).
- 79.4** **Water Street Road bridge.**

END MAP 1 - BEGIN MAP 2, PHELPS MILL TO BRECKENRIDGE

# OTTER TAIL RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL

## MAP 1 - Rochert to Phelps Mill



# OTTER TAIL RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL



## MAP 1 - ROCHERT TO PHELPS MILL



**mn** MINNESOTA  
STATE PARKS AND TRAILS

## ABOUT THE WATER TRAIL

The Otter Tail River is a peaceful, slow-moving river with few rapids, but it flows over and under dangerous obstacles. The river begins at Elbow Lake in Becker County and encounters many lakes as it flows westward. At Breckenridge, it joins with the Red River of the North and together they form the Minnesota-North Dakota boundary. The Otter Tail River starts out flowing south, but then flows north when it joins the Bois de Sioux River in Breckenridge. While higher flow rates will have adventurous paddlers dodging rocks, low flow rates may require walking alongside your canoe or kayak. Check gauge levels before your trip.

Hazards include numerous dams, dangerous obstructions and culverts with fast-moving water and little or no headroom. Do not enter a culvert or go under a bridge unless you are aware of what you may encounter. Even experienced paddlers should get out and survey obstructions. Bridges and culverts may have projecting bolts or nails. Bridges may have dams under them. If in doubt, stop, get out and look! Paddling on the larger lakes during very windy conditions is not recommended.



Be sure to use your river map and know what lies ahead.

## CONTACTS

### DNR NORTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE

2115 Birchmont Beach Rd. NE  
Bemidji, MN 56601  
218-308-2372

### DNR INFORMATION CENTER

500 Lafayette Rd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040  
888-646-6367  
info.dnr@state.mn.us

## TRIP PLANNING AND SAFETY



- Plan your trip with a map before you leave. Tell someone your plans, including put-in and take-out times.
- Travel with a companion or group.
- Most people paddle 2-3 river miles per hour.
- River levels can affect your speed and trip safety. Check conditions at [mndnr.gov/river\\_levels](http://mndnr.gov/river_levels).
- Don't underestimate the power of wind and waves, especially on large lakes.
- Be cautious of obstacles in the river and avoid overhanging and dead trees.
- Bring clean drinking water and a waterproof container with a first aid kit, waterproof matches and extra clothes.
- Wear a life jacket at all times while on the water.
- Purchase a license for your non-motorized watercraft if it's more than 10 feet in length. If you're not from Minnesota, check your state's watercraft license laws.

## WATERCRAFT CAMPING



- Camp only in designated campsites, which are often available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Riverbed camping next to private property is not permitted.
- Stay off private property. Stop only at designated sites; much of the shoreland is private property.
- Be sanitary! Use designated toilet facilities or bury human waste away from the river.
- Follow the rules for firewood. State forests allow you to gather dead wood for a fire, but state parks do not.

## MEDICAL



**PERHAM HEALTH**  
1000 Coney St. W  
Perham, MN 56573  
218-347-1200

**IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 911**

## RECOMMENDED DAY TRIP

### Wannigan Road to Riverside Park

- Put-in: Wannigan Road carry-in access  
River mile **152.1**
- Take-out: Riverside Park carry-in access  
River mile **144.5**
- Length: **8.4** river miles

You'll find little development along this scenic, slow-flowing stretch of river. This trip is best with late spring water levels, unless you make an extra effort to stay in the flow of the main channel. The river averages 30 feet in width and is mostly waist deep with deeper holes. As you approach the take-out, be prepared for rock weirs and faster moving water. Also be alert for a low utility pipe just past the take-out.

## EXPLORE ON SHORE

### City and County Parks

You'll find city and county owned parks along this section of the river, especially on the larger lakes. Many of these parks offer a place to launch, land or take a break during your paddle. See route description for more details.

## PROTECT THE RIVER

Your experience on the river depends on a healthy environment. As you explore the beauty of this waterway, also do your best to protect it.

### Protect Your Waters

- Before launching...before leaving
- Clean off aquatic plants and animals.
  - Drain all water away from the landing.
  - Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.

[mndnr.gov/invasives/aquatic](http://mndnr.gov/invasives/aquatic)

### Buffer Protection

The Minnesota buffer law establishes new vegetation buffers along rivers, streams and ditches to help filter out chemicals and sediment before they reach waterways.

[mndnr.gov/buffers](http://mndnr.gov/buffers)

## More Information

[mndnr.gov/watertrails](http://mndnr.gov/watertrails)

- River level reporting
- River conditions reporting
- Interactive water trail map
- Recommended routes
- River rapids definitions
- Virtual tours

Search for outfitters at [exploreminnesota.com](http://exploreminnesota.com)

This document is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by contacting [info.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:info.dnr@state.mn.us), 651-296-6157, or MN Relay 711.

